

Rastovorov, Yuri A

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JAPAN

Jan. 29, 1954

ROSTOVOROV SPIED ON U.S. AIR FORCE

Tokyo, ASAHI, Evening News, in English, Jan. 29, 1954--T

(Text)

The Japanese police are of the view that Yuri A. Rastovorov, second secretary of the Soviet mission in Tokyo, disappeared because he was afraid of the consequences of a slip-up he made in gathering intelligence information and intends to commit suicide if worse comes to worst.

They believe the fact that the Soviet mission, which had hitherto refused to have any dealing with the Japanese police, had come to the Japanese police requesting them to search for their second secretary could be taken to mean the Russians are already more or less sure about what has happened to Mr. Rastovorov. The latter was reported missing since Jan. 24.

Evidence points to the fact that Mr. Rastovorov had been ordered to return to the Soviet Union, presumably to answer for his blunders in gathering secret information about the U.S. Air Force in Japan and about the situation of Japan itself. He had booked a reservation on a BOAC plane scheduled to leave on Jan. 23 for Hong Kong, accompanied by Anatol Rozanov, co-captain of the Soviet speed-skating team which came to Japan and a former intelligence man of the Soviet mission in Tokyo. The plane was delayed because of snow, and Mr. Rastovorov had already disappeared by Jan. 25 when Mr. Rozanov, his supposed guard, had to leave alone.

Mr. Rastovorov was caught by Japanese police in the spring of 1953 near the Yasukuni Shrine receiving secret information from an airman from the Johnson Air Base. Investigation showed that the airman had been selling information concerning U.S. Air Force strength, including the latest EOS and their performance, over a number of months. It was also ascertained that the Russian had other informants from whom he bought information besides this airman, who was handed over to the commander of the Johnson Air Base.

The Russian official who made the unusual visit to the metropolitan police to ask that a Nation-wide search be made for Mr. Rastovorov, agreed that if found Mr. Rastovorov could be dealt with according to Japanese law. The official said that Mr. Rastovorov had been suffering from a nervous breakdown and there is a possibility that he may commit suicide.

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Since he has been on the intelligence staff of the Soviet mission in Japan for 3 years, since 1948, and at one time was a member of the Soviet Embassy in Manchuria, he is well-informed on the situation in Japan and speaks fluent Japanese, though with a foreign accent.

However, he was quite a poor skater; he confessed that the Soviet champions all laughed at his skating. It is reported that he did nothing but leave negotiations and operational matters concerning the skating meet to the team leader, (Krubin?). But, his activities in Japan were dubious.

Immediately after their arrival at the Prince Hotel on Jan. 12, Leader (Krubin?) and he disappeared with the mission representatives. After their return to Tokyo from Sapporo, he seldom stayed in the skaters' billet. Reportedly, he left the hotel immediately after breakfast, spent all day in the mission, and did not go back to the hotel until late at night.

Seemingly, the Soviet skaters were specially attentive to him. It is reported that they at once stopped any nonsense when he approached.

The Soviet skating team left Japan on Jan. 22, but he alone stayed in Japan on the pretext that he had caught cold.

As this man with a top-coat appeared on the Haneda Airport with no coat to see his team off, the skating meet promoters asked him about his cold. Reportedly, ... gesture. ... Jan. 23, he spent the whole day in the mission. On the morning of Jan. 24 he moved from the Prince Hotel to the mission, but it is reported he took no formal part in activities outside of the mission until his departure from Japan on Jan. 26.

The dubious activities of Mr. Rozanov give rise to a doubt as to whether Mr. Rozanov, as an attache of the skating team, did not come to Japan to deliver special orders from Moscow to the mission, and to arrest Rastovorov. The investigative authorities observe that he is in a certain way related with the Rastovorov disappearance case.